

Managing Loneliness through Music

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Abstract

Loneliness affects those who live alone, or even those who live with other people. While the feeling of loneliness can normally happen, it becomes “chronic” when it persists over a long time and many people experience it. Music is believed to heal social, emotional, cognitive, physical and spiritual sickness. Since ancient times, several philosophers and researchers studied therapeutic use of music to the emotions. Most of the studies mentioned about music and depression. However, there are only few studies which deal with managing loneliness through the use of music in the Philippine setting. This phenomenological study answered two research questions: a) “How does music influence the emotion and mental condition of a lonely individual? and b) What kind of music do the participants listen to when they are lonely?” For this study, five Filipino adults who experienced loneliness in a Christian university were purposively selected. Data were collected through an interview. The interviews were voice recorded, transcribed, and analyzed thematically. Findings show that music helps the participants concentrate and helps them manage loneliness by listening to their preferred music. The participants listen to secular music such as love songs, classical music and spiritual music. These songs generally have good meanings or message despite its style. Based on the shared experiences given, music influences the mental and emotional condition by serving as enlightenment, comfort, relief, consolation, and an uplifting instrument in times of sadness or loneliness. It was also found out that music cannot really influence someone when the mind is not conditioned to positivity and for not having a deep relationship to God. This implies that music has a big impact in how Christians think, feel, and react to sad situations. It is recommended that this research study can be conducted in a large number of participants using quantitative approach, and have further study about the effect of music to a person with depression.

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